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# Home Office Weekly Update

from the UNITED CHURCH of GOD

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May 1, 2025

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## From the Chairman...

Greetings to all from the home office,

It is an exciting time here as final details come together for the annual General Conference of Elders (GCE) meetings this weekend, which also marks the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the United Church of God, *an International Association*. While we will be looking ahead at the GCE meeting in reviewing plans and initiatives to proclaim the gospel and achieve the critical work we are called to do, it is also important to remember that we were founded as a fellowship purposely dedicated to preserving and declaring the truth of the Bible.

As I shared in my chairman video earlier this week, in the time leading up to the GCE meeting, the Council of Elders has been focused on the process of selecting a new president to lead the day-to-day operations of the Church. This represents an established and orderly procedure that has served the Church well over the past three decades.

The names of the three experienced and capable ministers whom the Council will be interviewing in the days ahead are: Aaron Dean, Peter Eddington and John Elliott. All three fully represent the spiritual and leadership qualities sought for this important position. The task before us as Council members is humbling and one of considerable gravity. As we proceed, I sincerely invite and request your prayers for both an inspiring GCE conference and specifically for guidance and direction from our heavenly Father and from the living Head of the Church, Jesus Christ, as the Council completes its tasks.

I also want to inform you that Rick Shabi elected to formally step down from his position as president earlier this week. Per the Church's Bylaw 9.5 and following precedent of two previous chairmen, I have now temporarily become both chairman and acting president of the Church until the new president is named on May 7. We as a Council are grateful for Mr. Shabi's service.

As noted earlier, the Council will meet in its customary fashion following the GCE weekend, where we will have a full schedule in addition to completing the selection and naming of a new president.

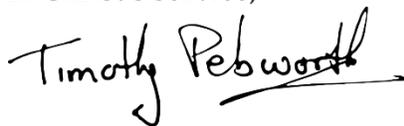
During this annual time when ministers and wives gather together, it is often a time of joy to see each other in person and renew friendships and relationships. During this same time, we throughout the Body of Christ, also somberly recognize the serious times in which we live. While we have peace and freedom in America, many areas of the world—including areas from which many ministers and wives will travel here—do not enjoy such peace or prosperity. My wife, Maryse, and I were reminded of that during our recent trip to Europe where we celebrated the Holy Days with French-speaking brethren.

But as these times intensify, we have the full and precious confidence that our God is a God of power, one who is actively guiding and supporting our lives and work. As David wrote in Psalm 91: “He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the LORD, ‘He is my refuge and my fortress; My God, in Him I will trust’” (Psalm 91:1-2).

In these times of potential economic and political uncertainty, I would also like to remind us all, one of the names of God is often translated as the “LORD of Hosts” in the Old Testament, but its meaning is rich for us today. It references and highlights God’s supreme manifestation of *power* and sovereignty over *everything*. And we are confidently told that “The LORD of hosts”—the literal Lord Almighty—“is with us” (Psalm 46:7).

Indeed, His power is with us all as we seek and do God’s will, powerfully proclaiming the gospel and preparing a people, “bringing many sons to glory” (Hebrews 2:10). In the days ahead, let us all collectively be about our Father’s business, doing everything in love (1 Corinthians 16:14) and trusting in Him.

In Christ’s service,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Timothy Pebworth". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Tim Pebworth, Chairman and Acting President

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## From Ministerial and Member Services

### The Remarkable Barnacle

The barnacle is a truly remarkable creature. When barnacles hatch they swim freely, just like other small shellfish. It's an unexpected sight because most of us are only familiar with barnacles after they've firmly secured themselves to something solid. These tiny creatures are known for attaching themselves to rocks, the hulls of ships, and even the supports of piers. The term "encrusters" describes them perfectly, as they latch on so securely that they never let go.

Once barnacles find their spot, they begin to grow a hard, protective shell around their bodies. This shell is essential for their survival, offering them defense against predators and harsh conditions. They are unwavering in their commitment to remain anchored.

### Anchored in Christ

This resilience is not just an interesting trait; it's a powerful lesson for us as God's people. Just as the barnacle attaches itself to something solid, we are called to fasten our lives firmly to the one solid foundation: Jesus Christ. The apostle Paul reminds us in 1 Corinthians 10:4 that Christ is our "rock," the bedrock of our faith. The storms of life, whether calm or turbulent, will come, but the question is: will we hold tightly to our God, our foundation, no matter what?

In Romans 12:9, we are instructed to "cling to what is good." This isn't just a suggestion; it's a command to stay rooted in what is unshakable and eternal. In a world that constantly changes it can be easy to be swept away by the distractions, fears and circumstances. But we must choose, like the barnacle, to hold fast to what is solid and lasting—the truth of God, His promises and His unwavering love. No matter the winds or waves that crash around us, we must remain steadfast, anchored in His goodness.

### Built to Withstand the Storms

Much like the barnacle's tough outer shell, we too need to be firmly rooted in Christ. A barnacle attaches itself with incredible strength, never letting go of its anchor, no matter the force of the waves that crash against it. Similarly, we as Christians must be deeply rooted in the love and truth of God.

In Colossians 2:7, we are reminded to be "rooted and built up in Him, and established in the faith, as you have been taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving." This is more than just a

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surface-level connection to God. It's about being deeply planted in His Word, in His promises and in the truth.

When we anchor ourselves in Christ, we are not easily shaken by the storms that come our way. The world is full of shifting circumstances, uncertainty and challenges. The winds of doubt, the floods of fear, and the waves of temptation can crash upon us. Yet when we are firmly rooted in Him, we stand strong. We are not tossed to and fro by the uncertainties of life, but like a barnacle, we are stable, secure and unmovable.

Life will no doubt challenge us, and the world will try to divide us, but together we can remain firmly rooted in God's love. As Jesus tells us in Matthew 7:24-25: "Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock: And the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock."

## **Unmovable in Faith**

We are called to be like that wise man whose house stood firm in the storm because it was built on the rock. Similarly, our faith must be built on the Rock that is Christ Jesus. He is our refuge, our protection, the Head of the Church and our source of strength. When we fasten our lives firmly to Him, we will not be moved.

Let us strive to be spiritual barnacles—anchored in our faith, unwavering in our devotion, and steadfast in our trust in God's promises. No matter what challenges or hardships we face, we know we are built on a solid foundation. Because of this, we will stand strong together through it all. Keep clinging to God, hold firm to His Word, and let the truth of His love hold you fast. With God as our foundation, we are secure.

—Steve Myers, Operation Manager, Ministerial and Member Services

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## Upcoming Events

May 8–11	<a href="#">Mammoth Cave Camping Weekend</a>	Mammoth Cave, KY
May 11	Second Passover Evening	
May 23–25	<a href="#">Northwest Regional Teen Formal</a>	Salem, OR
May 26–30	<a href="#">Preteen Camp Florida</a>	Umatilla, FL
June 1	Pentecost	
June 8	Laurel Church Picnic	Columbia, MS
June 15–18	<a href="#">Preteen Camp Colorado</a>	Allenspark, CO
June 15–22	<a href="#">Camp Cotubic</a>	Bellefontaine, OH
June 20–22	<a href="#">Northwest Men’s Weekend</a>	Seabeck, WA
June 20–22	Troyer’s Hollow Campout Weekend	Charm, OH
June 29–July 6	<a href="#">Camp Pinecrest</a>	Fredericktown, MO
July 6–13	<a href="#">Southwest Camp</a>	Prescott, AZ
July 6–13	<a href="#">Boundary Waters Adventure</a>	Minnesota
July 11–13	<a href="#">Women’s Enrichment Weekend</a>	Allenspark, CO
July 13–16	<a href="#">Preteen Camp Ironwood</a>	Stewartville, MN
July 13–16	<a href="#">Preteen Camp Ochoco</a>	Prineville, OR
July 18–25	<a href="#">Camp Woodland</a>	Temple, GA
July 20–27	<a href="#">Northwest Camp</a>	Rockaway Beach, OR
July 27–30	<a href="#">Preteen Camp Seven Mountains</a>	Spring Mills, PA
July 27–30	<a href="#">Preteen Camp Buckeye</a>	Delaware, OH
July 27–30	<a href="#">Preteen Camp Gilmont</a>	Gilmer, TX
Aug. 3	Kids’ Rodeo and Fun Day	Portland, OR
Aug. 26–Sept. 1	United Teen Camp	Westerose, AB
Sept. 5–7	<a href="#">Cleveland Women’s Enrichment Weekend</a>	Brunswick, OH
Sept. 7	<a href="#">UCG Gear Grinder Bike Ride</a>	Minnetonka Lakes, MN

Upcoming activities may be sent to [weekly\\_update@ucg.org](mailto:weekly_update@ucg.org). Additional calendar information is available on the [members’ website](#).

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